



Environmental Health Newsletter

January 2002

Professional Sanitarian Training

ADHS has been working on the development of a statewide Professional Sanitarian Training program. A group of Arizona County Environmental Health Directors have agreed to participate in a task force to develop the program. The status of the project has changed since this was mentioned in a previous newsletter. The group has completed the initial steps of putting together topics for consideration. Ron Holley of ADHS has compiled a vast amount of training aids that can be used and has formatted the source Michigan program to meet current Arizona codes. ADHS will soon be contacting the task force to gain their input and proceed with the completion of the project. It is hoped that the project can be completed by the summer of 2002.

The Professional Sanitarian Training will initially be done through CD-Rom based training. Eventually, as resources allow, the training will be placed on the web. When this is done, people involved in the training will be provided with passwords and a secure environment in which to take module examinations and track their progress through the program. Certificates of completion for individual modules can be issued over the net upon satisfactory completion of the module, and a "Diploma", or similar concept, can be issued at the completion of the entire training. The training will allow for all Arizona Sanitarians to receive a consistent baseline of training.

Executive Summary of Annual ADHS Report for Food Safety and Environmental Services

All Registered Sanitarians in Arizona will be receiving the 2001 Food Safety and Environmental Services Annual Report as soon as it returns from the printer. The following is a copy of the Executive Summary from the report.

The Arizona Department of Health Services organizes and directs the statewide public health sanitation programs for food safety, bottled water, hotels and motels, trailer parks, children's camps, public schools, and swimming pool maintenance.

Staff that implement the inspection programs must be licensed as a Registered Sanitarian. Statewide, there were 143 Registered Sanitarians employed at the 15 county health departments and the Arizona Department of Health Services. The Arizona Department of Health Services and the 15 local county health departments met the state inspection goals during FY 2001. The following bullets highlight FY 2001 accomplishments and findings.

- One hundred forty three sanitarians at the 15 county health departments and the Arizona Department of Health Services conducted more than 100,000 inspections at the approximately 47,600 regulated facilities in Arizona.
 - In FY 2001, there were more than 30,900 food establishments in Arizona, an increase of 3% over FY 2000. State and county sanitarians conducted approximately 72,000 food safety inspections at these establishments.
 - A total of 2039 cases of foodborne illness were reported in 2000. Children under the age of 5 had the highest risk of having a foodborne illness. Native Americans were 21 times more likely to be diagnosed with shigellosis than other Arizonans.
 - Inspection goals were achieved for bottled water facilities, bathing places, public accommodations, trailer parks, and schools.
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Variance Procedure

ADHS has been approached on several occasions about the State being involved in the approval and issuance of a variance under the new food code. To effectively address the issuance of a variance and statewide consistency, a procedure has been developed.

Variances were explained in a previous newsletter to be a *“written document issued by the regulatory authority that authorizes a modification or waiver of one or more requirements of the Code if, in the opinion of the regulatory authority, a health hazard or nuisance will not result from the modification or waiver.”*

The variance section is designed to address specialized processing methods, but can also be applied in other areas of a food establishment's operation. Variances will nearly always require a HACCP plan.

The variance procedure is designed to allow the local county regulatory authority to effectively control the issuance of the variance. The ADHS' formal issuance of the variance is contingent on the local regulatory authority's recommendation for approval and issuance. The ADHS will not approve a variance that has not received the local regulatory authority's recommendation.

Current Rule Packages

The next step for the Registered Sanitarian rule package is the Public Hearing. The Public Hearing on the package is scheduled for January 29th at 9:00 AM on the 4th floor of the ADHS building located at 1740 W. Adams, in Phoenix.

The ADHS has begun developing rules for Children's Camps. There are currently no rules for the camps. The current requirements are based solely on the statutory requirements. The new rules will primarily address licensing timeframes required by the Administrative Procedures Act.

Swimming pool rules are still being revised and analyzed at this time. An expected completion date for this package has not yet been determined.

It also appears that the bottled water rules need to be revised. It has come to our attention that there are some references in the current rule that have become outdated. The ADEQ issued a rule change in which the numbering of the citation was changed. When this occurs, there is an immediate need to open the rule and make necessary changes to reflect newly changed citation references.

Libraries to get Food Code

All of the public libraries within Arizona are going to be receiving an Arizona Food Code. The CD's or 3 1/4 floppies will be distributed to the libraries by the ADHS.

FDA's National Recommended Retail Food Regulatory Program Standards

FDA is currently working with ADHS and four Arizona counties to develop baseline self-assessments on the FDA National Recommended Retail Food Regulatory Program Standards. County participation is on a volunteer basis. Future involvement by all of Arizona's Counties is encouraged. The program is currently being examined to determine if it would be an appropriate model to conduct future ADHS assessments of delegated food programs.

This program involves extensive effort by the participants in analyzing their food programs as it relates to nine individual standards. The nine standards are:

1. Regulatory Foundation
2. Trained Regulatory Staff
3. HACCP Principles-based Inspection Program
4. Uniform Inspection Program
5. Foodborne Illness Surveillance
6. Compliance & Enforcement
7. Industry Recognition
8. Program Resources
9. Program Assessment

The baseline assessment is being done to provide the participants with insight into their programs strengths and weaknesses. Once this is known, efforts can be directed to addressing areas in need of improvement. A subsequent assessment will be made in two or three years to determine if progress is being made in improving program quality.

The National Recommended Retail Food Regulatory Program Standards can be found on the FDA web site at www.cfsan.fda.gov/~dms/ret-toc.html.

Mold

Mold is of growing interest to the public and the subject of many news and magazine articles. ADHS would like to provide some resources to you for mold information. There is a mold information sheet on the ADHS web site at www.hs.state.az.us/edc/ehpage.html

Under the Investigation and Surveillance heading is a link to our mold fact sheets. The information sheet addresses: 1) what is mold? 2) health effects, 3) detection of mold, and 4) general clean-up procedures. Under each of the headings there are sub-headings to more fully address the topic. Additionally, a list of useful publications is provided on the information sheet.

Other mold resources include the CDC, www.cdc.gov/nceh/airpollution/mold, and the EPA, www.epa.gov/iaq/asthma/triggers/molds.html

Wastewater Conference in Laughlin

The Arizona County Directors of Environmental Health Services Association will hold their biennial wastewater conference at the Riverside Resort in Laughlin on March 6-7, 2002. Contact Mike Campbell for registration forms and fee payments at 602-506-6618. This is an excellent conference that provides the latest in wastewater information and technology. It is also a way to get Continuing Education Units for your annual registration renewal. Once an agenda has been developed the Sanitarians' Council will assign CEU's for the conference.
